



**The House of Representatives  
STATE OF HAWAII**

**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Contact: Rep. Maile Shimabukuro**

**Telephone: (808) 586-8460**

**MAJOR STUDY APPROVED FOR WAIANAE COAST  
OCEAN AREA ENVIRONMENT**

**Honolulu.** A bill appropriating funds for a major study of the ocean areas of the Waianae Coast has become law without the governor's signature. The bill recognizes that the growing population of West Oahu and increased tourism are affecting the traditional uses of the area along the Waianae coast.

Act 314, (originally introduced as Senate Bill 2575 by Senator Colleen Hanabusa, with a companion bill, House Bill 2933 introduced by Representative Maile Shimabukuro) appropriates \$120,000 to the Department of Land and Natural Resources to conduct and complete a baseline environmental study of the Waianae Coast ocean area. The study will be used to establish the boundaries of an ocean recreation management area (ORMA) and to draft ocean recreation management area rules.

"This study, which is the first of its kind, is long over-due," said Rep. Shimabukuro. "The Waianae Coast is used by many people for different types of activities, commercial and recreational, and it has grown to the point where the natural resources are at risk of being abused. This study will, for the first time, implement requirements similar to an Environmental Impact Statement in the ocean."

According to DLNR, an Ocean Recreation Management Area (ORMA) is a special area established to provide public access, reduce user conflicts, promote public safety, and serves to avoid any negative impacts on humpback whales and other protected marine life. An ORMA is also designated to control commercial activity, such as thrill craft.

The bill authorizing the study was first introduced in 2005 and went through a lengthy process with unanimous and bi-partisan support; not one "no" vote was cast in committee or on the House and Senate floors. Yet, Governor Lingle vetoed the bill at the end of the 2005 session. Given the wide support for the intent of the bill, the Legislature came back to override the veto. Rep. Shimabukuro and Sen. Hanabusa worked closely over the past two years to set up the structure for the baseline study, and Act 314 is now in place to provide the necessary funding to get it started.

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